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A Anon.

LETTER

OF

ADVICE

TO ALL THE

MEMBERS

OF THE

Church of England,

To come to the

DIVINE SERVICE

MORNING and EVENING

EVERYDAY.

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A LETTER OF ADVICE TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH of ENGLAND.

To come to the Divine Service, Morning and Evening every Day.

My Christian Brethren,

I Direct my Discourse particularly to those that Profess to be of the Church of *England*, 'tis to you that I now speak as a Friend, as a Brother, for so I am sure we ought to be one to the other, with all lowliness and meekness, 'tis the Command of Christ (who is Love it self) that we love one another, by it we are known to be the True Disciples and Followers of him, and there can be no greater sign of our Love, than friendly to admonish one another, to this Holy Duty of Publick Prayers.

O do but consider the Beauty of Unity, and let it move you to run into the open Arms of your Mother the Church of *England*, and to be knit in the Bands of Amity with your Brethren in the Publick Assemblies every day in the Week, and then you will know, *How good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity*, Psa. 133. I hope there need but few words to incourage you, that are of so good a Church, which hath such honest Doctrines, and hath no design upon any of her Children, but to make them happy, to which end she invites them to come readily to her prayers every day; for not performing this great Duty, how many miscarry in their business and concerns for want of the Publick Blessings to go along with them? And many are sick and weak amongst us, and yet how many do still neglect coming, and what small Congregations do we often see in many Great Parishes on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, Is not this a reproach to Christian Religion, and to us that are of the Church of *England*? Shall we find time for every thing else, and shall not we find time for this great concern of our Souls? For with what confidence can we expect a Blessing from our Heavenly Father without asking it? And what an ungrateful thing is it to receive Blessings at Gods hands daily, and not daily to acknowledge, and give him Thanks for them in the Publick Prayers, as well as Private; for by the Publick, we let the World see, we are not ashamed of our Religion; upon which if we do not daily attend, Men have reason to think we are void of all sense of Comfort by it; indifferent in it, and will have no respect for it, or such Lukewarm Professors.

For God is much more Honoured by our Publick Addresses to him than he can be, by any thing we can do in Private; not but we may and ought to use Private Prayers suitable to our necessities, but we must not neglect his Publick Worship, which the Private ought not to hinder, but promote; because

becauſe in Truth, it is defective without Publick, being only Worſhip, but not ſo properly Honour, Glory, Sacrifice and Service.

See more at large in a late Diſcourſe of the daily and Publick Prayers, by the Reverend Dean of Peterborough.

On *Sundays* we have our Churches very full for the moſt part, which is a Conviction of our ſeeing its neceſſity, and and that one would think ſhould be a means to make us come every day, for I am ſure we want God's Bleſſing every day, as well as on the Lords Day. The Miniſters of our Church will and do incourage this Holy and good deſign for Publick Prayers every day; in Preaching to perſwade us to it. The ſatisfaction which every good Man finds in the conſtant uſe were indeed Argument enough, could it be expreſt to others; for do but ask any of theſe that come daily to Publick Prayers, and they will tell you, there is no greater Pleaſure nor Happineſs here on Earth.

Beſides, we that are of the Church of *England* (and ſhew our ſelves ſo Loyal and Dutiful in every thing elſe) by our Conſtancy at this beſt of Liturgies in the World, ſhall moſt convinceingly let others ſee (who boaſt how much they exceed in their Publick Devotions) that we are not ſhort of them in the daily performance of that Sacred Duty. And how highly are they to be commended that have promoted the Prayers of the Church every Day in ſo many ſeveral Pariſhes in and about this City of *London*? which already has had good influence on the Country, who in many Pariſhes do the ſame, which is ſo good an Example, that it will I hope incourage more to do the like, when we conſider it is our duty ſo to do; for this great Duty of ours, might be performed with great eaſe, if we would but meet in our Pariſhes and conſult what

Which may be ſeen in the Rules for our more Devout Behaviour in the time of Divine Service in the Church of England, *&c. lately publiſhed.*

what Hours are moſt convenient for the greateſt part of them, for I am ſure there is no Pariſh but has a ſufficient number that are of the Church of *England* that will come, and I hope there are none, but may find time before buſineſs breaks in upon them, or when it is leaſt preſſing on their time, or when it is over: So that it muſt be certainly our own fault if we cannot find time at ſome Hours of every Day for this the greateſt concern of our Souls.

And how many are there now among us that complain of want of Trade, and good ſucceſs; and of the badneſs of the times: And all this is in a great meaſure by reaſon we neglect the Publick Service of the Church, for if we do but perform this our Duty every day, we are continually engaging God's Providence for us; A Bleſſing will attend all our lawful concerns, and we ſhall proſper in them all; for *Firſt Seek the Kingdome of Heaven* (ſaith Chriſt) *and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.* And however our preſent Health may direct other Methods, and make us leſs careful of that Future intereſt, when we come on Sick-Beds we ſhall very much lament the neglect of it. The beſt Method indeed to prevent this unhappineſs in a growing Poſterity is for you that are Parents to take care that your Children as well as your ſelves, repair unto the Publick Service of the Church, as often as they can on the Week days; and that they may know how to behave themſelves there, let them read the *Rules for our more Devout Behaviour in the time of Divine Service in the Church of* England. Theſe Rules were Publiſhed, to ſhew in what good Order the Publick Service of the Church of *England* is, and the Excellence and Uſefulneſs of it, when its Rules are duly Obſerved.

Some will be apt to ſay, why will you go to Church, there will be nothing but Prayers to day; that is in words at length, there will be nothing but Praying and Honouring

ring of God, which is the choiceſt part of God's Worſhip, and Nobleſt Imployment in our Religion. The Council of the Apoſtles reſerv'd this great Duty for their own Miniſtration, *Acts* VI. *v.* 4. *We will give our ſelves to Prayer, and Miniſtry of the Word.* Here the primacy is aſſigned to Prayer, and it is evidently preferr'd before Preaching, being the end thereof; and well it may, in regard of its Superlative Worth and Vertue, for it is a Duty of the neareſt acceſs to God; and if there was a neceſſity of making ſuch Prayers for our Uſe, then there is a neceſſity of our uſing them when they are made. And perhaps that Peace which we have poſſeſſed, when Nations round about us have been embroil'd in Wars, may be owing in good meaſure to our Churches Prayers. Nor know I a more likely means we can uſe to fix peace amongſt our ſelves, and make it laſting.

See Mr. Warrens *Sermon on the Publick Forms of Prayers more at large.*

It is indeed beyond the capacity of this ſhort Diſcourſe to recommend a Duty in all its advantages, which is deſigned for the procuring all kinds of Bleſſings to all Mankind; and therefore to ſupply the ſhortneſs of this which deſigns ſome general Motives only; and to excite a farther view of its Excellences, I moſt heartily recommend to you the Advice of the Pious and Reverend Lord *Biſhop* of *Bath* and *Wells*, to the Clergy of his Dioceſs; that their greateſt Zeal be ſpent for the publick Prayers in the conſtant and Devout uſe of them every Day, both Morning and Evening, the Publick ſafety both of Church and State being highly concerned therein, and not to be diſcourag'd, if but few come to the Solemn Aſſemblies, but go to the Houſe of Prayer where God is well known for a ſure Refuge, go, tho' you go alone, or with but one beſides your ſelf. And alſo a Book lately Written by Dr. *Patrick* Dean of *Peterborough*, and Dr. *Comber*, of the daily Publick Prayers

of

of the Church; nor can I omit to conclude this Advice with a passage of a late Lord Bishop of *Ely*, who says, Our Service is a continual daily Sacrifice, a Morning and Evening Prayer, and tho the greatest Benefit of this belongs to those that daily attend it, yet being it is the Publick Sacrifice of the Church, all that are Members of that, have their part and interest in it, tho they be absent, yet not in equal measure. The present are intitled to the benefit of a Sacrifice offered by them, the absent as a Sacrifice offered for them, For this is our *Euge Sacrificium*, that is perpetually burning upon the Altar, for the Service of God, and in behalf of every Member of the Church that doth not *ponere obicem*' set a Bar upon himself by his willful neglect of it, or by his opposition to it. *Dr. Lany Bishop of Ely.*

So that I hope we may see our Churches full in the time of Divine Service every day, as well as when there is a Sermon. And my hearty Desire and Prayer unto God is, and shall be that they who formerly have not done it, may joyn with our Holy Chuch in her Heavenly Prayers, and that they who have done it, may still continue so to do. O! how ravishing a sight will it be to see this performed, it will seem a New World, and we should live as if we were in Heaven already.

Nothing now remains but to send up my Prayers to God, that he will affect by his Grace, all your hearts, that you may perform this your Duty.

And I pray God that he will vouchsafe us all, that follow these good Rules of our Church, that we may come to such a Glory as we cannot wish to have a Greater.

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